



Rockville Reports

MARCH 2018 • VOL. 64 #3



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Rockville Named Best Place to Live in Maryland

'Money' Magazine Ranking is Latest in Long List of Accolades

Rockville is the best place to live in Maryland, as recently rated by "Money" magazine.

"Money" cited Rockville's **"low unemployment and an ultralow crime rate"** as attractive to newcomers, as well as its high-ranking schools, shopping and amenities, which "help preserve its **hometown appeal.**"

"The City of Rockville offers the best of both worlds. We have the benefits of a small town while having the opportunities of a big city," Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton said of the ranking by "Money," which also ranked the city **No. 39 on its list of 100 "Best Places to Live in America."** "Rockville is a city of neighborhoods. We value the diversity that our residents and businesses bring and are thrilled to see others recognize that we are a special community."

Find "Money" magazine's list of the best places to live in all 50 states at time.com/money/5108196/best-places-to-live-every-state-us.

Rockville also recently ranked No. 9 nationally on the list of **"Happiest Cities to**

Work for 2018" compiled by CareerBliss.com, a job posting, review and salary comparison site, and **No. 7 in Maryland in a study of best places to retire** by SmartAsset, which considered taxes, the number of doctors' offices and opportunities for recreation and social life.

Rockville is the **ninth-most diverse city** (and fourth-most diverse small city) in America, according to WalletHub, with more than one-third of the city's residents born outside the United States.

The city was recognized for its commitment to the health, welfare, safety and equality of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community with a **perfect score on the Human Rights Campaign's 2017 Municipal Equality Index scorecard.**

With a population of almost 70,000 residents, Rockville is one of Maryland's oldest and most well-educated towns. Over 64 percent of Rockville residents have a college education. The median household income is \$101,774 (in 2016 dollars).

The city offers a wide range



Rockville was recently named a best place to live, work and retire.

of cultural opportunities and special events, including the annual Hometown Holidays Music Fest in Rockville Town Center and an annual Lunar New Year celebration. VisArts, the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery and F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre enhance Rockville's quality of life with art and entertainment by local, regional and national artists. The annual F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference brings some of America's most

distinguished authors to the city each year.

With roots in its history and an eye toward the future, Rockville's family-friendly neighborhoods and diverse housing mix offer a hometown atmosphere with urban amenities that earned the city the top spot on Livability.com's 2016 list of **"Best Cities for Families."**

Livability.com also ranked Rockville No. 13 on its 2017 list *continued on pg. 5...*

March 11: Spring Forward and Check Smoke Alarms

Daylight saving time begins March 11, which is the ideal reminder for homeowners to check their smoke alarms while setting clocks forward.

State law from 2013 requires that battery-operated smoke alarms be replaced every 10 years from the date of manufacture. The devices should also be tested at least once a month.

State law also calls for older smoke alarms to be replaced with new, sealed, long-life battery-powered smoke alarms. Hardwired 120-volt electric smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years with new 120-volt smoke alarms with battery backup to ensure proper and timely operation in a fire.

Homeowners with hardwired smoke alarms should not replace their devices with battery-powered alarms. Fire code-compliant smoke alarms can be purchased at most home improvement stores.

For more information visit www.rockvillemd.gov/firesafety or email Timothy Diehl, city fire marshal, at tdiehl@rockvillemd.gov. ❖

Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan is Clear for Takeoff

Transformative Document Envisions a Thriving Area

The Mayor and Council's approval of zoning text and map amendments in January has cleared the way for the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan to become a reality. The plan was adopted in 2016 after more than a decade of intensive study, public hearings and planning.

The framework of regulations, now in place for about 382 acres along a 2-mile stretch of the pike, implement the plan's vision for a multi-use, economically vibrant and attractive neighborhood, with comfortable walking and biking, new parks and better access to transit.

Much of Rockville's growth in jobs and population over the next 20 or more years is anticipated in the area the plan covers. By 2040, the plan projects almost 12,000 residents and 14,000 jobs



This 2008 photo shows Rockville's Chief of Long-Range Planning David Levy (right) talking with community members about the pike plan.

in the plan area — about 40 percent of Rockville's population growth and one-third of its employment growth, compared with 2015's 3,530 residents and 9,050 jobs.

An early focus for the plan *continued on pg. 7...*

An Evening of Cultures at International Night



Now in its second year at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, International Night returns March 23 with a festival of the world's cultures.

At this free event, audience members will be able to enjoy performances and costume displays, and can sample unique and traditional ethnic and cultural foods in the theater's social hall.

The doors open for this Friday evening event at 5:30 p.m., with an address by attending Mayor and

Councilmembers at 6 p.m. followed by performances, then food tasting. The event will be emceed by Tiffany Copeland, an assistant professor at Montgomery College — Rockville's radio program.

No tickets or registration are required, but seating is limited. For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/internationalnight or contact yyeboah@rockvillemd.gov. The F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre is located at 603 Edmonston Drive. ❖

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MAYOR & COUNCIL
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Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364

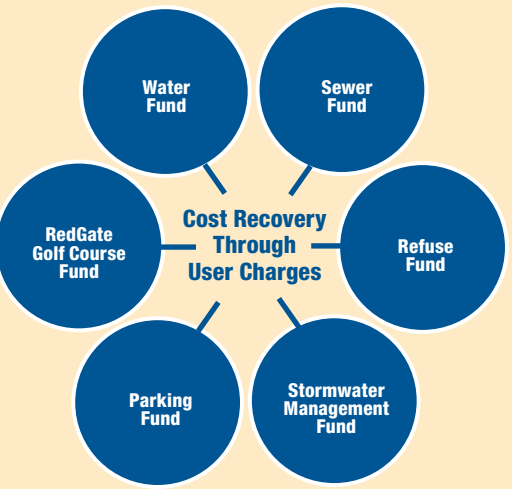
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Rockville Utilities

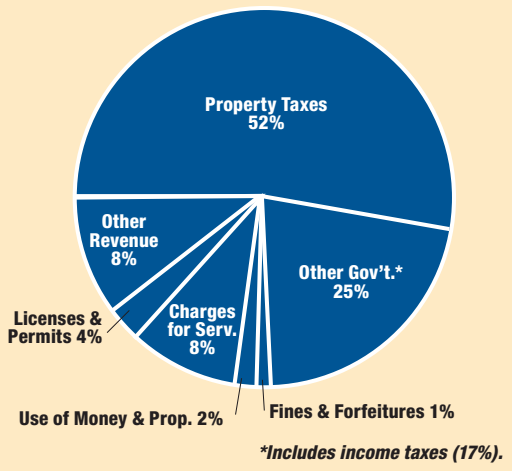
Rockville operates six enterprise funds, four of which are utility funds. They function like a private business, with costs fully recovered through user charges. The utility funds are the water fund, the sewer fund, the refuse fund, and the stormwater management fund. Three of these funds – water, sewer and stormwater management – include proposed rate increases for Fiscal Year 2019. These rate increases are necessary to repair and replace aging water and sewer pipes and other infrastructure vital to providing these services, and for required payments to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission related to a regional wastewater treatment plant.

For the city's water and sewer customers, rates for a residential property with a 3/4-inch meter and 15,000 gallons of usage will increase approximately 6.3 percent. Recycling and refuse service will remain at \$445 per household per year. Stormwater management rates are proposed to increase by \$4.30, or 3.4 percent, to \$132 per year. For tables illustrating the annual financial impact of changes to the city's fees and charges for two sample households, see page 22 of the proposed budget at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.

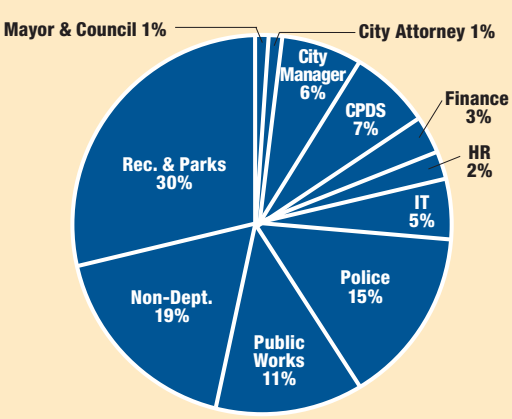


Understanding the General Fund

Proposed FY19 General Fund Revenues



Proposed FY19 General Fund Expenditures



Budget Watch: Fiscal Year 2019

Rockville's Mayor and Council continue budget deliberations this month with a public hearing and work session focused on crafting a Fiscal Year 2019 budget that outlines the city's priorities.

City Manager Rob DiSpirito was scheduled to present the Mayor and Council with a FY 2019 budget proposal on Feb. 26, after the deadline for this edition of "Rockville Reports." Find the proposed budget at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget and video of the presentation with the Feb. 26 meeting listing at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

"This budget focuses on the health, safety, and overall well-being of the Rockville community," DiSpirito wrote in a letter presenting the proposal.

The budget, which covers the fiscal year that begins July 1, is scheduled for adoption by the Mayor and Council on Monday, May 14.

The proposed FY 2019 operating budget of \$136.2 million is an increase of 4.5 percent over the total operating budget for FY 2018. The general fund budget, which supports the largest portion of the operating budget, is \$82.1 million, a 3 percent increase.

The city's current real property tax rate of \$0.292 per \$100 of assessed valuation would remain the same for FY19. All residential and commercial property owners pay this tax.

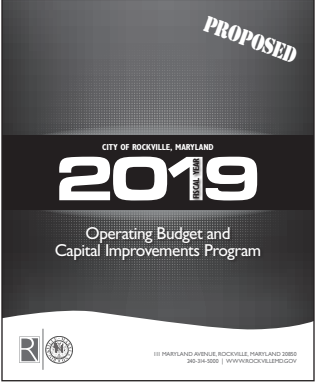
Property tax, the city's largest source of general fund revenue, is estimated to increase by 4.5 percent from FY18, to \$42.7 million, due to higher property assessments during the most recent round, new properties on the tax roll and an increase in personal property tax revenue consistent with recent trends. Income tax, the city's second-largest single source of general fund revenue, is estimated to increase by 4.6 percent, to \$14 million.

The number of full-time positions funded by the proposal includes two new police officers, a new geographic information systems/asset management support specialist, a new urban forestry maintenance worker, and a new information systems security

engineer. Costs for these new positions were partially offset by eliminating three vacant positions and some temporary employee funding.

The proposal also includes a 1 percent cost-of-living adjustment and an average 3.5 percent step increase for all regular employees; wage increases for temporary employees to a rate that is comparable with those of neighboring jurisdictions; increases in overtime, mostly attributed to police; and increases for the cost of city-provided health care benefits.

The proposed FY 2019-2023 Capital Improvements Program, the five-year plan for funding new construction and infrastructure maintenance, includes \$23.3 million in new funding, combined with a carryover of \$42.9 million to support 46 projects during the fiscal year. The proposed budget includes funding for nine



- newly-funded projects:
- Electronic plan submission and review software.
 - Dogwood Park renovations.
 - Isreal Park shelter replacement.
 - Pervious parking lot replacement at Fallsgrove Park.
 - Pedestrian bridge repairs at the Rockville Metro Station.
 - Water Treatment Plant raw water infrastructure protection.
 - Water Treatment Plant safety improvements.
 - Improvements to the Gude

OFFER IDEAS

- At www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.
- At public hearings during the March 19 and April 9 Mayor and Council meetings.

BUDGET AT A GLANCE

- Monday, March 5: Work session.
- Monday, March 19: Public hearing.
- Monday, April 9: Public hearing.
- Friday, April 13: Public record closes.
- Monday, April 23: Work session.
- Monday, May 14: Budget adoption.
- Meetings are live streamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11; and available a day after each meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

maintenance and emergency operations facility.

- An enclosure at the Gude facility for recyclable materials collected for transfer.

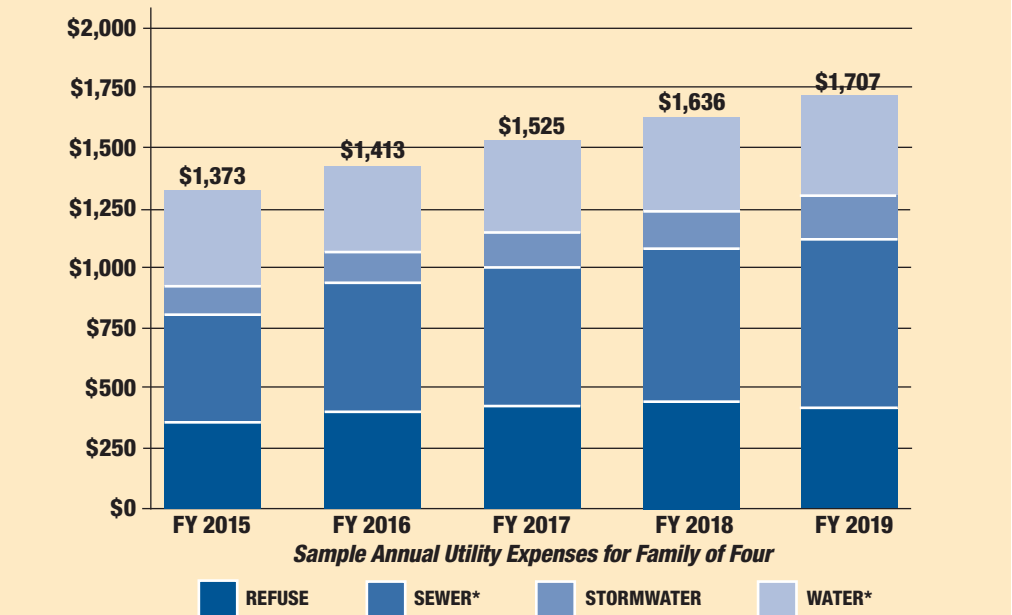
There is no taxpayer-supported debt issue planned for FY19. The water fund plans to issue \$6.1 million in bonds and the sewer fund plans to issue \$6.5 million in bonds, to support water and sewer fund projects in FY19 and FY 2020. ✚

Proposed Rockville Utility Rates


Based on the proposed FY19 rates, annual residential expenses for city utilities for a sample family of four would increase by \$70.78 for the year, an increase of 4.3 percent.

	ADOPTED FY 2018	PROPOSED FY 2019
Refuse Rate		
No increase	\$445 per year	\$445 per year
Sewer Rate*		
6.9% increase	\$668.60 per year	\$714.40 per year
Stormwater Management Rate		
3.4% increase	\$127.70 per year	\$132 per year
Water Rate*		
5.2% increase	\$394.88 per year	\$415.56 per year

Past Five Years of Utility Expenses



* The city's water and sewer rates are tiered based on meter size. Nearly all the capital costs in the sewer fund, and a substantial portion of the operating costs, are payments for the operation of and capital improvements to the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority's Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant. For more on water and sewer rates, see page 372 of the proposed budget. Find the proposed budget at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget.

 **HISTORIC TAX CREDITS...** Rockville's Historic District Commission takes part in the county's preservation tax credit program to help owners of historic properties with maintenance expenses for the exterior of their buildings. To learn more about the HDC and tax credit programs at the county, state or federal level, or for an application, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/historic. Applications should be postmarked by April 2. For more information, contact Sheila Bashiri, preservation planner, at 240-314-8236 or sbashiri@rockvillemd.gov.

Mayor & Council

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Meetings: March 5 (work session) and 19 at 7 p.m. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter. Drop-in sessions are held monthly at 5:30 p.m. in the Mayor and Council office. No appointment necessary. Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton is joined by Councilmember Mark Pierzchala on March 5.

Get Involved with the City

Stay informed of the business before city leaders and share your thoughts:

- **Follow the action in person:** Meetings are at 7 p.m. on most Mondays, at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., or follow from home on channel 11. Meetings are also available via live streaming, and on demand the day after the meeting, at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11.
- **Stop by a drop-in session:** The mayor and one councilmember meet with community members one Monday each month from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Find the drop-in schedule at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil.
- **Speak at Community Forum** (up to three minutes): Community Forum is held during each Mayor and Council meeting. Priority is given to speakers who have signed up in advance by calling 240-314-8280 by 4 p.m. on the day of the meeting, and to those who are speaking on an agenda item.
- **Send an email** to mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov.

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County-Level Priorities: Schools, Services, Recreation Funding

Money for schools, city-provided services and a fair share of state dollars for recreation facilities again make the list of proposed priorities for the City of Rockville to advocate for at the county level in 2018.

The priorities, which were scheduled for a Feb. 26 discussion by the Mayor and Council, set a framework for promoting and protecting Rockville's interests when working with county officials on issues of mutual interest. They are:

Capital projects at Rockville schools, including replacement of Twinbrook and Maryvale/Carl Sandburg elementary schools and Thomas S. Wootton High School, and an addition to Richard

Montgomery High School.

Payments by the county to reimburse the city for providing certain services, such as road and bridge maintenance and police services. The county's current reimbursement to the city for road maintenance is about \$3.2 million short of full funding, according to the Montgomery chapter of the Maryland Municipal League. The full funding amount is based on a formula that pegs reimbursement to what the county spends on maintenance per road mile each year.

Funding through Program Open Space, which provides counties with state aid for planning, acquiring and developing land for recreational facilities. Last year, a coalition

that included the mayors and recreation and parks staff from Rockville and Gaithersburg, with support of County Councilmember Sidney Katz, convinced the County Council that POS funding was unfairly going solely toward county projects. Rockville received POS funding for the first time since Fiscal Year 2010, with nearly \$576,000 to renovate the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center. City staff is proposing that the city uses the same advocacy approach this year to ensure Rockville gets its fair share of aid.

For more details on these priorities, contact Linda Moran at lmoran@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8115. ✚

Applicants Wanted for Task Force on City Boards and Commissions

The Mayor and Council are seeking community members to serve on a task force that will study the city's boards and commissions.

Over six to nine months, the Boards and Commissions Task Force will review the Rockville City Charter and Code and provide a report to the Rockville Mayor and Council. The task force's work will include examining the effectiveness, necessity, structure, membership definitions and work plan of each city board or commission.

Boards and commissions play an important role in city government, providing the Mayor and Council with informed public opinions, thoughts and ideas that help shape the city. The Mayor and Council want to ensure that boards

and commissions remain relevant to the city and to the Mayor and Council. They believe that board and commission members' efforts should complement those of city staff and elected officials, and that their expertise and experience should be fully utilized in formulating city policies and practices, whenever possible.

The task force will review enabling legislation for each board or commission and propose revisions to ensure clarity and understanding of the scope of their work. It will identify gaps or overlaps between boards and commissions and recommend continuing, repurposing, merging, eliminating or adding boards or commissions. It will also review membership requirements and determine

whether eligibility requirements or expertise should be required for appointment.

Up to 13 task force members will be appointed by the Mayor and Council. The task force could include, but is not limited to, former mayors and councilmembers; current or past members of boards and commissions serving Rockville or another organization; and members of the community at large. When practical, members will be Rockville residents or people who work or do business in Rockville.

For more information and to apply visit www.rockvillemd.gov/bctaskforce or contact City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Kathleen Conway at kconway@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8280. ✚



HAWKINS HONORED... Community leader Fran Hawkins (right) was honored by Rockville's Mayor and Council last month with a certificate of recognition for her decades of service to the Lincoln Park community. Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton, left, made the presentation. Hawkins has been a tireless advocate and volunteer for the community, and has served on the Lincoln Park Civic Association for 17 years, 15 as president. To see Rockville 11's piece on Hawkins for Black History Month, visit www.youtube.com/cityofrockville, and search for "Fran Hawkins."

Breweries, Wineries and Distilleries Allowed

Breweries, wineries and distilleries with tastings and samplings? That's now a possibility in Rockville, following a zoning ordinance amendment approved by the Mayor and Council in February.

The amendment allows full production of alcoholic beverages in some areas of the city. Production in the mixed-use employment zone must be at least 500 feet from a residential use. Limited production, such as microbreweries and microdistilleries, are allowed in other specific areas with the provision that they can't be near a school and cannot be next to or across from a residential use in a residential zone.

Tastings and samplings would be allowed at the production facilities in accordance with state law. ✚

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- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to the City Clerk's Office, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. (Learn more below.) Find other ways to give your time and talents to your community at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions. The webpage also includes schedules and cancellations, and contact information.

Note: Meetings are held at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., unless otherwise noted.

- **March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29** Development Review Committee 9 a.m.
- **March 1**, Environment Commission 7 p.m.
- **March 7**, Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee 7 p.m.
- **March 14, 28**, Planning Commission 7 p.m.*
- **March 14**, Cultural Arts Commission 7 p.m.
- **March 14**, Sign Review Board 9 a.m.
- **March 15**, Historic District Commission 7 p.m.
- **March 21**, Rockville Sister City Corporation 7 p.m.
- **March 22**, Recreation and Parks Advisory Board 7 p.m. at the Pump House, 401 S. Horners Lane.

*Televised on Rockville 11.

Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Appeals (1 alt.)
- Cultural Arts Commission (1)
- Planning Commission (1)
- Recreation and Parks Advisory Board (1)
- Senior Citizens Commission (1)
- Historic District Commission (1 regular/1 alt.)



STAY INFORMED: The Mayor and Council meeting schedule and agendas can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil. Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting. Sign up at www.rockvillemd.gov/notifyme to receive an email or text message when a new agenda is posted.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CITY ON ROCKVILLE 11

www.youtube.com/cityofrockville

REDI Seeks Businesses to Appreciate

Rockville Economic Development, Inc.'s Rockville Business Appreciation Week 2018 is April 9-13.

Throughout the week, teams of ambassadors comprising city leaders, city staff, and REDI representatives visit Rockville businesses to thank them for locating in the city and to introduce business owners to resources available to help their companies grow. REDI ambassadors visited over 50 companies during Business Appreciation Week 2017.

Businesses located within the city limits that are interested in having REDI visit during the week should contact Bridget Mburu, REDI business development manager, at mburu@RockvilleREDI.org or 301-355-2202 or visit rockvilleredi.org/news-events/business-appreciation-week/.



'If I Were Mayor' Contest Gives Students a Chance to be Mayor for a Day

The deadline is approaching for fourth-graders attending schools in Rockville to submit essays for the statewide "If I Were Mayor" essay contest.

The theme of the contest, organized by the Maryland Municipal League and the Maryland Mayors Association, is "Live to Lead." Students are asked to write an essay, no longer than 275 words, that would describe how, if they were mayor, they would get the community involved in addressing an issue or cause, and letting people know how their city is making positive changes. Essays must be received by Friday, March 30.

One winning essay will be selected from each of MML's 11 regional districts throughout the state. Winners, their parents and their teachers will be recognized during an awards ceremony in Annapolis. In addition, Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton will select a Rockville-area student to serve as the city's Mayor for a Day in May.

Learn more at www.mdmunicipal.org by selecting "Mayor's Essay Contest" under "Programs and Services," or call the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations' office at 240-314-8280.

Wasilak Appointed Acting CPDS Director Search for New Director is Ongoing

The City of Rockville is actively looking for a new director to head its Community Planning and Development Services department. In the interim, longtime Chief of Zoning Jim Wasilak has been appointed as CPDS acting director.

Novak Consulting Group has been hired as the recruitment firm to conduct the search.

The position, which would oversee a department of more than 40 people and a budget of close to \$6 million, has been posted online at thenovakconsultinggroup.com/rockville-maryland-cpds-director.

According to the listing, the new director will be responsible for overall administration and implementation of the department's mission, which includes long-range community planning, development review, zoning administration and enforcement, historic preservation, redevelopment coordination, housing programs and building construction codes.

Community Police Academies Offer Hands-On Experience and Education

Rockville Offers Academies for Community and for 60-Plus Residents

Community members once again this spring have the opportunity to learn what it takes to be a police officer through the Rockville Community Police Academy, or with a special course aimed at 60-plus residents.

The Rockville City Police Department is accepting applications for the free, 8- to 10-week Rockville Community Police Academy, which will be held in April and May at a time and place to be determined. Participants 18 and older will learn about all aspects of the police department, receive hands-on training and earn a graduation certificate upon course completion. Topics will include:

- Crime scene processing.
- Firearms training simulations.
- K-9 unit demonstrations.
- Traffic law.
- Detectives and investigations.
- Bomb unit.

For more information and to register, email Cpl. Ken Matney at kmatney@rockvillemd.gov.

RCPD is also offering a free course highlighting safety and education for the 60-plus population. The course will also explore code enforcement, the K-9 unit and forensic science, and will include a tour of the city's police station. It will meet from 10:30 a.m.-noon on Wednesdays, April 11-May 16, in the Azalea Room of the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive. Register for course #4198 at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration, beginning Tuesday, Feb. 27.

For more information about the Rockville City Police Department and its community policing mission, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/police.

Meet Rockville Employees: The Water Main Repair Crew



Water repair crew members (L to R): Robert Wyatt, Jr.; Randy Maness; Travis Epley; Duane Pickett; Bobby Smith; Larry Connelly; Mike Shipp; Jason Blake; Wayne Butler, Jr.; Jason Burdette; Albert Budd; Roger Jones; William Hudgins; Tim Malone; Brad Thomas; Jake Harrison; Hilleary Demar; Ovidio Cruz, Robert McDonald; Alfonso Alfaro; Tim Thomas; Kevin Edwards; and Brian Plymale.

Cold snaps in late winter and early spring keep city crews busy responding to broken water mains. Who are these dedicated employees who are in the trenches at all hours, working to bring water service back online for the Rockville community? Meet the team:

Who's on the team?

Operations and maintenance assistant superintendents, crew supervisors and utility crews all play vital roles. The assistant superintendents and crew supervisors, including William Hudgins, who has been with the city for 24 years, are certified State of Maryland Water Distribution Operators.

What does the team do when there's a water leak?

Crews are typically notified of a leak by community members reporting water in the roadway. The city's

24-hour utility emergency line is 240-314-8567. Similar to the police department, we advocate "if you see something, say something" to help us respond before further damage occurs. Crews are on call 24/7 in any kind of weather, and quickly respond to reports of water leaks. The goal is to minimize water service interruption to less than six hours.

When a leak is reported, a crew supervisor will confirm the leak and notify an assistant superintendent, who provides progress reports to the director of public works and other city staff throughout the repair process. Crews place safety equipment near the leak site to protect workers and keep the public and property safe, and for traffic control. Miss Utility is notified in order to mark underground utilities. Crews use equipment, expertise and experience to locate the leak. They notify affected water customers before isolating the water

main by turning off specific valves in an effort to leave as few residents as possible without water.

After excavating to expose the leaking pipe, crews make repairs by using clamps, cutting out and replacing pipe, or another method, depending on the type of leak. After completing the repairs, crews turn water on to flush any contaminants out of the pipe and restore water service. Then they backfill the trench, patch the roadway and clear the site of debris.

Why is the job so important to the city and its infrastructure?

By responding quickly, crews reduce the length of service interruptions to our customers, ensure public health and safety, and prevent potentially costly damage to private property, roads and other infrastructure. ❖

Annual Report Looks Back on REDI's 20th Year

Rockville Economic Development, Inc. marked its 20th year with continued growth in its mission of helping businesses locate, launch and expand in Rockville.

REDI's programs include the Maryland Women's Business Center, a program of Rockville, which helps entrepreneurs start and grow women-owned businesses positioned for long-term growth. Together in 2017, REDI and MWBC assisted more than 250 businesses, with MWBC helping launch 52 new businesses in Maryland and serving more than 1,200 individuals, helping to increase client sales by \$2.1 million and making a positive impact on the state's economy.

In 2017, Rockville again led Maryland municipalities with an average unemployment rate of 3.1 percent, well below the average municipal unemployment rate of 4.2 percent, Paul Newman, REDI's board president, wrote in a letter introducing the report.

"Steady growth of private sector employment opportunities brings economic benefits to Rockville residents," Newman wrote. The city's overall commercial vacancy rate dropped from 14.3 percent during the fourth quarter of 2016 to 13.9 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017, with a slight rise in office rental rates, "an indication that there is demand for the office market in the city," he

wrote.

One year in, the Rockville MOVE Program, which provides relocation assistance to companies moving into the city, and the Business Expansion Fund, which provides grants to businesses that are growing, have proven successful. Through the programs, REDI assisted eight new or expanding companies, occupying a total of nearly 40,000 square feet and representing 85 jobs.

Read the full report at rockvilleredi.org/redi-releases-2017-annual-report. REDI Executive Director Laurie Boyer offers an overview of the report in an interview with Rockville 11 at youtube.com/cityofrockville. Search "REDI 2017." ❖



WHAT WE'VE BEEN WATCHING ON YOUTUBE ... Last month, Rockville 11's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/cityofrockville) touted the city's latest accolades, including being named the best place to live in Maryland and a top 10 happiest city to work, and took us to a gathering that offered an opportunity to meet some of Rockville's Sikh neighbors.



Save These Dates for Earth Month in Rockville

The 49th Earth Day is Sunday, April 22, and Rockville will mark it with a celebration beginning in March and including the following free activities aimed at environmental sustainability:

March 19: The Mayor and Council issue a proclamation recognizing Earth Hour and Earth Day in Rockville.

March 24: Earth Hour. See the ticker, in red, at the bottom of this page for details.

April 4: 5th Annual Montgomery County Energy Summit, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. in Silver Spring. Learn more at www.mcenergysummit.org.

April 12: Glenview Mansion and Peerless Rockville Speaker Series: Learn the Three B's: Bee, Beneficial and Blooms, 7 p.m. at Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Drive. Learn more at www.peerlessrockville.org/events-and-programs.

April 14: 30th Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup. Cleanup sites include:

- Croydon Creek Nature Center, 852 Avery Road, 9 a.m.-noon.
- Twinbrook Community Recreation Center, 12920 Twinbrook Parkway, 9:30-11 a.m.
- Maryvale Park, 812 First St., 10 a.m.-noon.

City staff will greet volunteers. Gloves and bags will be provided. Student Service Learning hours are available. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes. For more information, or to register, email environment@rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-8870.

April 22: Science Day, noon-5 p.m. at Montgomery College, Rockville campus, 51 Mannakee St. Visit the Croydon Creek Nature Center table. Free. Learn more at www.rockville-sciencecenter.org/rockville-science-day and in the article on page 6.

April 25: Arbor Day Ceremony. Tree-planting at 11 a.m. at Rockmead Park, 1800

Greenplace Terrace.

April 28: Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Rockville City Police Station, 2 W. Montgomery Ave. Drive up and drop off unused or expired medications so that they are safely disposed of and kept out of our environment. For more information, call Cpl. Ken Matney at 240-314-8922.

April 28: Spring Festival with Native Plant Sale, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Croydon Creek Nature Center.

May 5: Montgomery County Greenfest, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Jesup Blair Local Park, 900 Jesup Blair Drive, Silver Spring. A free, family-friendly festival dedicated to celebrating the people and environment of Montgomery County. Visit montgomery-countygreenfest.org.

May 6: Invasive Plant Pull, 1:30-4:30 p.m. at Croydon Creek Nature Center. Work with a regional expert to pull invasive plants. Gloves will be provided. No registration necessary. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Call 240-314-8770 for details.

May 12: Green Your Backyard Information Session, 10-11:30 a.m. at Croydon Creek Nature Center. Learn about RainScapes Rewards and other city programs designed to help you green your backyard and reduce pollution in this free information session. To register, call 240-314-8870 or email rainscapes@rockvillemd.gov with your name, phone number and address.

Find more, including tips for helping the environment year-round and how to bring an environmental speaker to your next community meeting, at www.rockvillemd.gov/earthmonth. Read April's "Rockville Reports" for more about Earth Month. Learn how to get involved and live greener and healthier at www.rockvillemd.org/environment.

TERRIFIC Bikes is Back with Free Bikes for Kids

Rockville has some outstanding school kids, and every TERRIFIC kid needs a bike. How do you prove you're TERRIFIC? Show us you're Trustworthy, Earnest, Respectful, Responsible, Involved, Fair, Industrious and Caring!

That's the core of the 2018 TERRIFIC challenge, which gives free bikes to students in grades 1-5 who fulfill six out of 16 "good deeds," such as perfect attendance in school for one month, volunteering with a charity, picking up litter in a public place, or helping someone who is sick or elderly.

To be eligible, students must have a sponsor to monitor their progress. Successful participants receive a certificate for taking part and

are invited to attend the Mayor and Council meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, May 7. Completed forms need to be turned in by Saturday, April 7. (If you got your bike, why not try again and earn one for a younger sibling?) Find details and download a form at www.rockvillemd.gov/terrificbikes.

Awardees receive their reconditioned bikes and new helmets at a special event, 10 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m., Sunday, May 20, hosted by Rockville Bike Hub, where bikes will be fitted and kids will receive a brief safety orientation.

Have a bike to donate? Email rockvillebikehub@gmail.com or visit www.rockvillebikehub.org for more information. ✚

Rockville is No. 1

continued from pg. 1...

of the **Top 100 Best Places to Live**. It was the fourth straight year Rockville made the national list's top 20.

Recognized as a four-time **Playful City**, Rockville offers plenty of places and opportunities for play, including a wide variety of recreation programs, classes and activities for all ages, a swim and fitness center, nature center, senior center, and numerous community centers. They are encircled by the "Bicycle Beltway," the Carl Henn Millennium Trail, a signed, 10-foot-wide, shared-use path that makes an 11-mile loop around Rockville.

With 65 city parks and more than 1,000 acres of

parkland within 14 square miles, Rockville has about 16 acres of open space for every 1,000 residents.

Nearly every home is within a short walk of a park.

The city takes pride in its financial health, with rating agencies awarding Rockville a **triple-A bond rating every year since Fiscal Year 2008 and no property tax increase in 10 years.**

The city's most recent biennial community survey showed that **community members are happy to call Rockville home**. Ninety-two percent of residents who responded described the city's overall quality of life as excellent or good. Eighty-six percent rated the city's overall quality of services as excellent or good. ✚



What Would Your Community Do with \$1,000?

April 12 is the Deadline for Grant Applications

Neighborhood associations could receive up to \$1,000 in a matching grant for projects promoting community involvement and connectivity.

Applications are being accepted through Thursday, April 12 for Rockville's Organizing Communities and Neighborhoods (ROC-N) Matching Grant Program. The program is designed to support and empower neighborhood groups and encourage participation by community members. Projects meet one or more of the following:

- Strengthen and improve neighborhood organizations and community groups.
- Improve the appearance of Rockville's communities.
- Advance inter-neighborhood or community cooperation.

Qualified organizations, including PTAs, could receive up to \$1,000 and must provide a cash or in-kind match equal to or greater than the grant amount requested. At least 25 percent of the match must be volunteer hours. Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible. Funding is limited.

Projects are evaluated based on the neighborhood's ability to provide a funding match, the level of community involvement, project readiness and the tangible community benefit. Projects are evaluated and selected for funding by a committee of City of Rockville staff.

Find more information and applications at www.rockvillemd.gov/ROC-NGrant or call 240-314-8344.

City Academy Returns This Spring

The Rockville City Academy returns this spring with a new opportunity to get to know the City of Rockville.

The six-session program begins Thursday, May 10 and offers an opportunity to learn from staff leaders who oversee the city's daily operations. Topics will include:

- Rockville's form of government and the Public Information and Community Engagement Division.
- The Department of Public Works.
- Planning and the master plan process.
- Police and code enforcement, including neighborhood watch.
- The Department of Recreation and Parks, including a tour of city recreation facilities.
- Community leadership training.

The highly interactive program seeks to empower new and existing community leaders to use their talents to participate in and serve their communities and the City of Rockville.

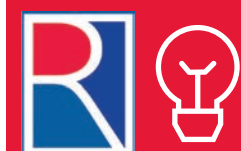
The program will be held at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave. Find full session dates and times, and apply, at www.rockvillemd.gov/academy. Spaces are limited. Participants must be 16 or older and live or work in Rockville.

For more information, contact Hjarman Cordero at hcordero@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8344.

Planning to landscape this spring? Rockville can help.



Rockville's RainScapes Rewards program offers cash rebates to residents, community associations and nonprofits for landscaping with native plants and trees, installing rain barrels and removing or replacing pavement to help green your backyard and reduce pollution. Learn more and apply at www.rockvillemd.gov/rainscapes.



LIGHTS OUT! ... Rockville will turn out the lights in observance of Earth Hour, an international effort in support of climate change action. Earth Hour encourages people to turn off all non-essential lights in their homes and businesses for one hour, from 8:30-9:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 24. The city will participate by turning off all non-essential lights at the city's Gude maintenance facility. Learn more and find ways to take part in Earth Hour every day at www.earthhour.org/blog/10-ways-celebrate-earth-hour-daily.

Connect with us on Social Media.



Apply Now for a Spot in the Memorial Day Parade

Rockville's 74th Annual Memorial Day Parade will march through Rockville Town Center with a variety of marching bands, drill and pompom units, floats and other displays at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, May 28.

Organizations or individuals interested in participating in the parade should apply by Friday, April 6.

For parade rules and regulations, and to download an application, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/HTH.

Artists Sought to Beautify Park Road Underpass

A work of art in an underpass? Rockville, CSX Transportation and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Art in Transit Program are offering the right artist \$100,000 to make that happen at the Park Road underpass.

The underpass is near two residential neighborhoods, East Rockville and Lincoln Park, and is close to Rockville Town Center. The project will encompass concrete walls on each side of the underpass, each of which is composed of two sections, one owned by WMATA and the other by CSXT. The city owns the lights and conduits in the underpass. Beautifying the underpass is among the Mayor and Council's priority initiatives for Rockville.

The deadline for submissions is 11:59 p.m. Friday, March 30. Details about this nationwide call for artists, with requirements for submissions, can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/AIPP. For more information, contact arts programs supervisor Betty Wisda at 240-314-8681 or bwisda@rockvillemd.gov.

Eight-Week Program Challenges Senior Center Members to Exercise

The Rockville Senior Center is challenging its members to take part in an eight-week fitness challenge that will begin Monday, March 19. Prizes will be awarded for the three senior center members who exercise the greatest number of minutes. An organizational meeting will be held at 2 p.m. Monday, March 12, for participants to receive the challenge packet and to review the program's guidelines. Registration is required for this free program. Register by March 19 with course #4784 at www.rockvillemd.gov/ registration. Must be a senior center fitness member.

Rockville Rec and Parks Wins State Association Awards

Rockville's Recreation and Parks Department will bring home two prestigious accolades from this year's Maryland Recreation and Parks Association annual awards. The MRPA's "Celebration of Excellence" was held March 1 in Baltimore.

MRPA recognized the Rockville Civic Ballet as an organization within the state "that has contributed outstanding service within the past two years to the parks, recreation and leisure profession." Founded in 1975, the civic ballet has 100 dancers of all ages and abilities from numerous ethnic backgrounds, and strives to be affordable to everyone in the community.

The association also awarded Best Special Event Publication to Rockville's annual Hometown Holidays Music Festival. "The [entry's] vibrant colors and musical elements help to convey an effective message about the performers and all of the fun activities at the three-day festival," MRPA stated.

For more on the Rockville Civic Ballet, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/arts/ballet. See page 8 for details on the civic ballet's production of "Sleeping Beauty." For information about Hometown Holidays visit www.rockvillemd.gov/hometownholidays and see the article on this page.



Latin Pop to '90s Rock on Six City Blocks: The Hometown Holidays Music Fest

Four Stages of Music, Local Food Favorites and Kids Fun Return May 26-27

The Hometown Holidays Music Fest will feature more than 25 local, regional and national performing artists and the best local food around on Saturday, May 26 and Sunday, May 27 in Rockville Town Center.

The 30th annual Memorial Day weekend music festival is a destination for music lovers, featuring performances on four stages across six city blocks.

Newcomers this year include two popular acts from the Washington metropolitan area: the Latin pop-rock of Ocho de Bastos at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Hungerford's Tavern Stage and the eclectic and soulful DuPont Brass, at 2:30 p.m. Saturday on the Bud Light Beach Stage. Baltimore's Here's to the Night will offer up '90s nostalgia with alt-rock classics, one-hit wonders, hip-hop legends, and pop gems from the era at 4:30 p.m. Sunday on the Maryland Avenue Stage.

The main Bud Light Beach Stage will once again have a Maryland flavor, with Rockville favorite Lloyd Dobler Effect (2:30 p.m. Sunday) and the phat

blues music of Baltimore's Kelly Bell Band (4:30 p.m. Saturday), returning. Family favorite Reptiles Alive! will present its popular wildlife education experience on the Town Square Stage at 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

Visit "City of Rockville Hometown Holidays" on Facebook, where a new musical act will be profiled each week on #MusicMonday. Find the full lineup, as it is announced, on a new, mobile-friendly Hometown Holidays Music Fest website at www.rockvillemd.gov/HTH.

The weekend will once again feature favorite food from local restaurants at the Taste of Rockville, as well as kids amusements, the return of "the beach" sand pile and the 74th Annual Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade on Monday, May 28. For information on applications to participate in the parade, see the article on this page.

The festival is just a five-minute walk from the Rockville Metro station. Festival-goers who drive or bike can find parking options at www.rockvilleparking.com. ✚

'World of Nature' on Display at the Glenview Art Gallery

"The World of Nature" premieres at the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery with an opening reception at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, March 25.

See Vicky Arana's tree paintings, mixed-media assemblage by Lisa A. Tayerle and Lynda Andrews-Barry's new media installation.

The exhibit continues until Friday, April 27.

The Glenview Mansion Art Gallery is free and ADA accessible, and open 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Thursday. The

STUDENTS: TIME TO RETRIEVE YOUR ART

Students with work displayed at Rockville's Annual Student Art Show have three dates in March to pick up their pieces:

- 2:30-4:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 13 and 14.
- 4-7 p.m. Thursday, March 15.

gallery is located on the second floor of the mansion, at 603 Edmonston Drive. For more information, contact Julie Farrell, jfarrell@rockvillemd.gov. ✚

Save the Date: Rockville Science Day is April 22

The 29th annual Rockville Science Day offers a chance to experience science hands-on, with exhibits from over 90 local organizations and businesses. The event features animals, astronomy, biology, chemistry, the environment, robotics and rockets.

This annual Rockville tradition is free and will be held from noon-5 p.m. on Sunday, April 22, at Montgomery College's Rockville campus, at 51 Mannakee St. The Mayor and Council are scheduled to issue a proclamation during their meeting on Monday, April 9, recognizing Science Day.

Learn more and register to exhibit at rockville-sciencecenter.org/rockville-science-day.

Can't Wait for Science Day?

The Rockville Science Center sponsors a free Science Tuesday on the second Tuesday of the month at the Rockville Senior Center, a Science Café on the third

Tuesday of the month at Branded '72 restaurant, and summer camps at the Bullis School and at City of Rockville community centers.

For something a bit more hands-on, the RSC hosts activities at the Studio i Makerspace at the Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Ave., in Rockville Town Square. Activities include programming, electronics, rocketry, amateur radio license training and other high-tech projects. Find the Studio i Makerspace schedule at www.meetup.com/Rockville-RSC-Makerspace.

Learn more about these and other upcoming events at rockvillesciencecenter.org/events/list.

RSC is a nonprofit supported by the generous donations of its members and sponsors. Visit rockville-sciencecenter.org/support to learn more. ✚

Documentary Explores Iranian Artist's Life (Over a Glass of Wine)

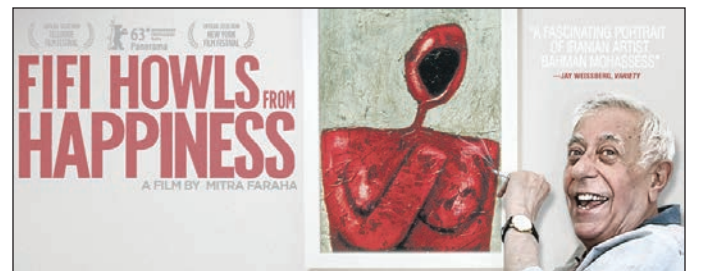
A documentary in Farsi, with English subtitles, concludes Glenview Mansion's free Wine and Foreign Film series on Tuesday, March 13.

"Fifi Howls from Happiness" explores the work and life of provocative artist Bahman Mohassess, the so-called "Persian Picasso," whose acclaimed paintings and sculptures dominated

pre-revolutionary Iran. The documentary is described as "addictively fascinating and exceptionally clever," by the "Village Voice."

The film, for cinephiles age 21 and older, will be shown café-style in the mansion's conservatory. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. The movie begins promptly at 7:15 p.m.

The event is free, with



wine on sale at \$3 a glass. No tickets or reservations required.

Glenview Mansion is located at 603 Edmonston

Drive. Free, well-lit parking is available. For more information, call 240-314-8682 or visit www.rockvillemd.gov/arts. ✚



WHAT ARE WE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH? March is packed — not only is it Women's History Month, March celebrates the American Red Cross, Irish-American heritage, middle level education, youth art, and music in our schools. It's also National Celery Month, which tangentially fits with March as National Nutrition Month, as well as National Professional Social Work Month. (St. Patrick's Day is Saturday, March 17. Have fun, but be responsible!)

March CALENDAR

CC Croydon Creek Nature Ctr., 852 Avery Rd., 240-314-8770.
GM Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8660.
FSF F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8690.

LP Lincoln Park Community Ctr., 357 Frederick Ave., 240-314-8780.
CH Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 240-314-5000.
SR Rockville Senior Ctr., 1150 Carnation Dr., 240-314-8800.

FACILITIES LEGEND:

SFC Rockville Swim and Fitness Ctr., 355 Martins Lane, 240-314-8750.
TF Thomas Farm Community Ctr., 700 Falls Grove Dr., 240-314-8840.
TC Twinbrook Comm. Rec. Ctr., 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy., 240-314-8830.



MAR-17

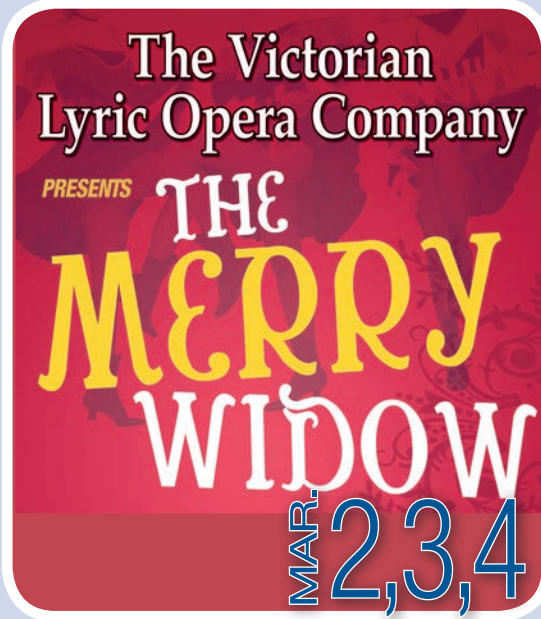


Pajama
Jam!

MAR-9



MAR-10



The Victorian
Lyric Opera Company

PRESENTS
THE
MERRY
WIDOW
MAR-2,3,4



MAR-21



MAR-24

1 LITTLE ACORNS: THE NOSE KNOWS. Explore nature with your little ones through a variety of play-based activities. Time is spent outdoors, weather permitting. Adult participation required. Spaces limited. Advanced registration recommended. For ages 18-36 months. Register for course #2815. \$7 R/\$9 NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

1,15 WOMEN LIVING ALONE: HOW TO LIVE ALONE AND NOT BE LONELY. A longstanding open enrollment support group in which members support each other through listening and offering tips, suggestions and advice for a variety of issues. 1-2:30 p.m. Meets first and third Thursdays. FREE. Register with course #2854. **SR**

2,3,4 "MERRY WIDOW," PRESENTED BY THE VICTORIAN LYRIC OPERA COMPANY. 8-10 p.m. March 2 and 3; 2-4 p.m. March 4. *See article on page 8.* **FSF**

6,27 CANCER SUPPORT GROUP. This psychoeducational therapy group for people with, or impacted by a loved one with, cancer will address coping with the diagnosis and treatment, interacting with the health care industry, supporting and being supported by loved ones, and sharing with and supporting one another in the group. Register for course #2856. FREE. 1-2:30 p.m. **SR**

8,22 MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT GROUP. This psychoeducational therapy group addresses what MCI is and how to cope with it, including assistance for short-term memory and modifications for driving. Meets second and fourth Thursdays. Register for course #2857. FREE. 1-2:30 p.m. **SR**

9 PAJAMA JAM FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT. A night of family fun watching a movie on the big screen. Refreshments sold by Twinbrook Elementary School PTA. FREE. 8-9:30 p.m. **TC**

10 ROCKVILLE SENIORS, INC., PANCAKE BREAKFAST. Register in person or mail payment to Rockville Senior Center: \$10 in advance/\$11 at the door; \$4 kids 12 and younger; \$30 for family of four. Check or cash accepted. Make checks out to R.S.I. Open to the community. **SR**

11 "MEDIEVAL TIMES," PRESENTED BY ROCKVILLE CONCERT BAND. Conducted by Music Director John A. Saint Amour. *See article on page 8.* 3-5 p.m. **FSF**

15 LITTLE ACORNS: SIGNS OF SPRING. Explore nature with your little ones through a variety of play-based activities. Time is spent outdoors, weather permitting. Adult participation required. Spaces limited. Advanced registration recommended. For ages 18-36 months. Register for course #2816. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

15 WINTER LIFEGUARD TRAINING CLASS. This American Red Cross Lifeguard Training course will certify students in lifeguard training, CPR/AED for the professional rescuer and first aid. Space is limited. Students must attend all class sessions held every Thursday from March 15-May 10 (no class on March 29). Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/20600. \$195. Register for course #3619. 7-10:30 p.m. **SFC**

17 NATURE TOTS: AMPHIBIANS. Discover the wonders of nature with your child. Each session, a naturalist helps you delve into a different nature topic through nature play, crafts, stories and hikes. Time

is spent outdoors, weather permitting. Adult participation required. Spaces limited. Advanced registration recommended. For ages 2-5 years. Register for course #2807. \$8 R/\$10 NR. 10-11:30 a.m. **CC**

17 WINTER LIFEGUARD RECERTIFICATION AND TRAINING REVIEW. Students must present their American Red Cross certification card at the first class and must bring a CPR mask. Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/20600. Register for course #3582. \$125. 3-10:30 p.m. Saturday, March 17; 5-9:30 p.m. Sunday, March 18. **SFC**

17,18 "SLEEPING BEAUTY," PRESENTED BY ROCKVILLE CIVIC BALLET. The classic story-book fairytale, set to Tchaikovsky's stunning music. Directed by Eleanor Simpson. 7:30-9:30 p.m. March 17; 2-4 p.m. March 18. *See article on page 8.* **FSF**

18 OUTDOOR SCIENCE CLUB: SPRING. Young scientists investigate a variety of science topics through hands-on activities and time spent exploring the forest preserve. What goes bump in the night? Explore animals who are active while we sleep. For ages 6-8 years. Spaces limited. Advanced registration recommended. Register for course #2819. 1:30-3 p.m. **CC**

20 TWINBROOK LIBRARY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP. Discussion of "The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears," by Dinaw Mengestu, part of the 2018 NEA Big Read series of events (montgomerycountymd.gov/Library/programs/neabigread.html). This book tells the story of the immigrant experience in Montgomery County and the Washington metropolitan area. No need to register; everyone is welcome. Books available at the check-out desk. For more information, call 240-777-0240. 6:30 p.m. at Twinbrook Library, 202 Meadow Hall Drive.

21 WILD ABOUT ART. Children become naturally creative through a variety of process art-based projects. Each session includes two to three art experiences. Dress for a mess! Adult participation required. Ages 2-5 years. Register for course #2811. \$6 R/\$7 NR. 10-10:45 AM **CC**

23 INTERNATIONAL NIGHT. An evening of fun and entertainment to learn about the different cultures that make up our community. Dance, costume displays, performance and a tasting of unique and traditional foods. FREE. *See article on page 1.* 6-8:30 PM **FSF**

24 BREAKFAST WITH THE BUNNY. The bunny's making a special trip to Thomas Farm Community Center. A magic show, spring crafts, games, an opportunity to meet, greet and pose with the Bunny and an egg hunt. A light continental breakfast will be served. Bring your camera. Fee applies to each person attending. Course #4855. \$14 R/\$16 NR. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **TF**

26 SPRING BREAK MINI-CAMPS BEGIN at Lincoln Park, Thomas Farm and Twinbrook community centers. *See the article on page 8.*

Find the current recreation guide at www.rockvillemd.gov/guide. Sign up and search for courses, programs, classes and more at www.rockvillemd.gov/register. Enter the course number listed on the calendar entry to see more details and to register.

R = Residents • NR = Nonresidents • MEM = Member • NM = Nonmember

FOR MORE INFO AND UP-TO-DATE EVENT LISTINGS: WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV/CALENDAR.ASPX

Rockville Pike Plan

continued from pg. 1...

is the on the southern area of the pike around Twinbrook Metro station, where development interest is high. The zoning amendments offer options for large developments located near the Metro station, including the potential for greater building height, in exchange for more amenities such as open space and affordable housing units, beyond what would otherwise be required. These projects are referred to as "Champion Projects" in the plan.

The city has received concept-level plans for the first potential Champion Project on the east side of the pike, an 18-acre mixed-use development by B.F. Saul, within walking distance of the Metro station. The plans feature a 1-acre park as a centerpiece and new roads, including a northern extension of Chapman Avenue.

The Mayor and Council will determine if the proposed development meets the criteria for a Champion Project at a project briefing, which will likely take place in spring.

Additionally, the Mayor and Council approved a new mixed-use zone to gradually reduce building height and intensity of uses moving away from the Metro station and the pike. One of the plan's policies is to protect existing, surrounding neighborhoods from more intensive development.

Major planning initiatives undertaken by the City of Rockville over the years include the completed Town Center Master Plan and ongoing Rockville 2040 update to the citywide master plan.

For more information about the Rockville Neighborhood Pike Plan, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/pikeplan. ❖

Inspection Services Invites Public to Stakeholder Forum

Hear Latest News from City Manager and ISD Staff

"Streamlining the Permitting Process" will be the topic for a stakeholders' forum, held by Rockville's Inspection Services Division, this month at City Hall.

Attendees will meet and hear from Rockville City Manager Robert DiSpirito, and hear the latest news from Inspection Services Division leadership and staff, including updates on personnel, policy and regulation, the hiring process for a new director of Community Planning and

Development Services, the 2018 code adoption process and timeline, plus the opportunity to provide important feedback.

The forum will be held from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 21, in the Mayor and Council chambers at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave. To RSVP to attend, visit bit.ly/permitforum2018.

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/inspectionsservices to learn more about the Inspection Services Division. ❖

Rockville's Ready for Spring with Spring Break Mini-Camps

Spring break is nearly here and Rockville's three community centers are ready with Spring Break Mini-Camps — exciting, supervised programs, crafts, games, sports and adventure for kids in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Mini-camps run Monday-Thursday, March 26-29, and include a visit from the Croydon Creek Nature Center. Participants should bring a lunch each day and wear comfortable clothes and sneakers. Programs vary slightly by location.

To register for Spring Break Mini-Camp, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/registration and enter the course number:

- Thomas Farm Community Center, 700 Fallgrove Road. Course #4886: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$170 for residents, \$190 for nonresidents.
- Twinbrook Community Recreation Center, 12920 Twinbrook Parkway. Course #4868: 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Cost is \$200 for residents, \$220 for nonresidents.
- Lincoln Park Community Center, 357 Frederick Ave. Course #4893: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Costs is \$170 for residents, \$190 for nonresidents.



Spring Sports — Now Registering

Youth coach-pitch baseball, T-ball and soccer, and adult softball, volleyball and soccer are just a few of the sports all ages can take part in this spring.

Registration for spring sports leagues for youth and adults is currently open; the registration deadline is Monday, March 5. Register for track and field by Thursday, March 1 and save \$10; the registration deadline is Thursday, March 8.

Practices for youth track and field begin at the end of March, with meets beginning in mid-April. Practices for youth soccer, T-ball, and coach-pitch baseball begin early April, with games beginning mid-April.

Registration deadlines for adult league players and teams are in late March. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation/sports for league details and registration information, or call 240-314-8620.

Beat the Water with Swim Center Triathlon Training

Triathletes can boost their swimming strength with two Rockville Swim and Fitness Center programs geared specifically to the open-water component of a triathlon.

Beginners to world-class triathletes can take part. Register with the course number listed below at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration.

- Triathlon Swim Skills: 8:05-8:55 a.m. Sundays, from March 4-April 22 (no classes on Sunday, April 1); course #2998.
- Triathlete Swim Endurance: 7-8:30 p.m. Sundays, from March 4-April 22 (no classes on Sunday, April 1); course #3576.

Find out about Rockville Swim and Fitness Center pool schedules, seasonal hours, personal training opportunities and more at www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter.



Questions, Concerns or Ideas?

Reach out to Rockville City Manager Rob DiSpirito at rdispirito@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8102.

'Building Bridges in a Diverse Society' Workshop Seeks Students

"Building Bridges in a Diverse Society," a dynamic, highly interactive diversity leadership workshop offered by the city's Human Rights Commission, returns in April.

The free workshop, for students attending high school in Rockville or attending Montgomery College-Rockville, will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on

Saturday, April 21 at a location to be determined in Rockville.

The curriculum, based on the teachings of peace-building organizations, will provide students with tools to handle difficult situations with an understanding of diverse populations. It is designed to help students recognize prejudice and isolation, appreciate

diversity and create an environment of inclusion in their schools.

Student leaders of diverse backgrounds are especially encouraged to attend. Student Service Learning hours will be offered and verification of hours attended is available for college students. Lunch will be provided.

Find an application at

www.rockvillemd.gov/humanrights. For more information, call Janet Kelly, the city's Human Rights Commission liaison, at 240-314-8316 or email jkelly@rockvillemd.gov. For Americans with Disabilities Act modifications, call the city's ADA coordinator at 240-314-8108, TTY: 240-314-8137 or relay 711. ✦

Spring Recreation Guides Are Out

Yearning for spring weather? Us too! "Life in Rockville" and "Adults 60+," the city's guides to recreational programs, courses and events throughout Rockville, are out and packed with that spring feeling!

Sixty pages of "Life in Rockville" are filled with dozens of things to do from March to May: events; sports and leagues for all ages; performances at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre; aquatics and fitness programs at the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center; nature walks and talks at the Croydon Creek Nature Center; before and after school care at the city's three community centers;

and much more!

"Adults 60+," a publication of the Rockville Senior Center, lists programs for Rockville's mature adults, including computer classes, educational courses, fashion shows, trips, arts, fitness and sports.

See the guides at www.rockvillemd.gov/life. To register online for programs, courses and events, and to browse listings of what the city has to offer, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/registration. Register in person or pick up copies of the guides at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave. or any recreation facility.

General registration begins Thursday, March 1. ✦

Become Pool Operator Certified in Two Days Unique Course to be Hosted at Swim and Fitness Center

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will host a unique course that will allow those who operate swimming pools or waterparks to receive their aquatic facility operator certification in just two days.

Sponsored by the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association, the session, to be held 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday, March 3 and 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, March 4, trains candidates on the most important mechanical, chemical, operational and risk management aspects of all pool and waterpark facilities. The pool operators course results

in a nationally recognized certification that is valid for five years.

The course is aimed at anyone who is or will be responsible for the operation, maintenance or management of an aquatic facility.

To register, visit www.mrpanet.org, click on the "Events/Training," then "Community Calendar," "Training," and select "Aquatic Facility Operator Certification Class." For more information, contact Jennifer Mogus, MRPA training coordinator, at jen@mrpanet.org. The center is located at 355 Martins Lane. ✦

Merry Widows, Medieval Times and a Fairytale Classic this Month at the F. Scott Theater

Song, dance and music fills the stage of the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre this month.

"The Merry Widow," presented by the Victorian Lyric Opera Company, tells the story of Hanna Glawari, a famous, wealthy widow from a fictional eastern European country whose ambassador attempts to find her a new husband and keep her fortune in the country, saving it from bankruptcy. 8 p.m. Friday, March 2 and Saturday, March 3; 2 p.m. Sunday, March 4.

Tickets for adults are \$28; \$24 for seniors (65 and older); and \$20 for students.

The Rockville Concert Band will perform "Medieval Times," conducted by Music

Director

John Saint Amour at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 11. No tickets required, but \$5 is the suggested donation.

The classic fairytale set to Tchaikovsky's stunning suite, "Sleeping Beauty," will be performed by the Rockville Civic Ballet, under direction from Eleanor Simpson. 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 17; 2 p.m. Sunday, March 18. Tickets cost \$17 for adults; \$13 for children (12 and younger) and seniors (aged 60 and older).

The theater is located at 603 Edmonston Drive. Buy tickets at www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre, by phone at 240-314-8690 or in person at the box office. ✦



NEW GAVEL MAKES DEBUT... A piece of Rockville history will soon be on display in City Hall — a new gavel made from a beam taken from the King Farm farmstead. The gavel is, "A beautiful piece of work continuing the tradition in Rockville of preserving what we can and making things go forward into the next generation," Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton said at the Jan. 22 Mayor and Council meeting, where the gavel was first used. The gavel was carved by Lawrence A. Taylor Jr., of Taylor Turnings, Annapolis. To see Rockville 11's report on the new gavel, visit www.youtube.com/cityofrockville and search for "gavel."



Get Into It

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BACK IN THE DAY... Puppets, puppets and more puppets was the focus of several family nights throughout March 1980, according to that month's "Focus on the Arts" section of "City of Rockville Newsletter." The Clarion Puppet Theatre, made up of Donna and David Wisniewski and Diane Davis, were set to perform several plays at schools around Rockville that year for Expression 80, a Recreation and Parks Department program.